Women and Shariah
Separating Fact from Fiction



International Women's Conference
Jumada II 1436 AH - March 2015

Women's Section
in the Central Media Office of
Hizb ut Tahrir



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Introduction

All Praise is to Allah (swt) who bestowed on us the blessing of Islam and peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allah (saw) and his family, companions and all those who followed him.

On Saturday 8th of Jumada II 1436 Hijri, corresponding to the 28th of March 2015, the Women's Section in the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir hosted an unprecedented international women's conference entitled, "Women and Shariah: Separating Fact from Fiction".

This momentous event was conducted across various continents and consisted of gatherings of female opinion-makers held simultaneously in 5 countries: Palestine, Turkey, Tunisia, Indonesia and the UK. The conference took place in electronic halls that were united through live talks broadcast from each venue to the other locations, and also included a talk delivered from Jordan. The event was also broadcast live to people around the world and was watched by gatherings of women in a number of other countries.

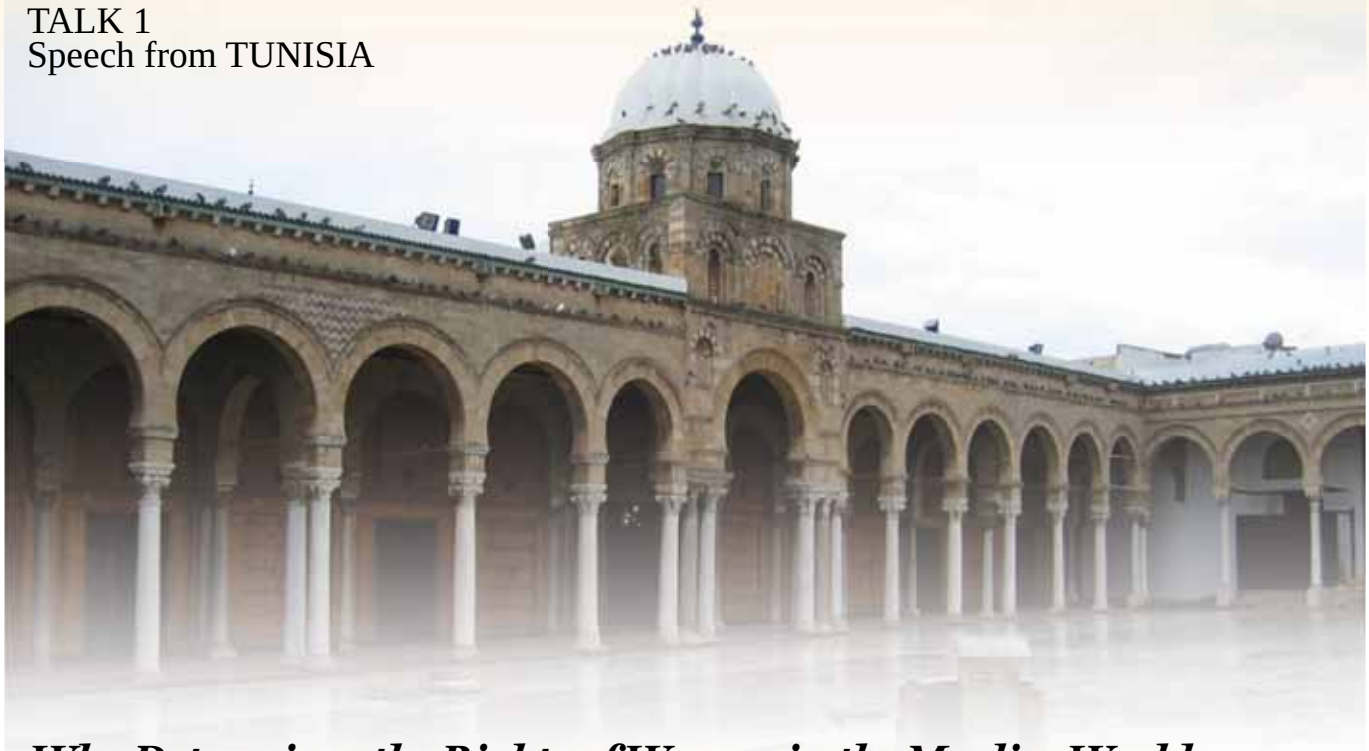
Attendees included female journalists, politicians, academics, activists, lawyers, scholars, community leaders, and representatives of organisations. The conference was the culmination of a six-week intensive global campaign that included an active social media campaign as well as engagement with the media internationally and discussions with women in countries across the world.

The conference sought to dismantle the lie of women's oppression under the Shariah, and present a clear vision of the true position, rights, and roles of women as defined by Islam and implemented by the Khilafah. The event also countered the accusations against specific Islamic rulings related to women, as well as explained the basis, values and laws of the unique Islamic Social System and its positive impact upon women, children, family life, and society overall. Additionally, the conference examined Western and 'Islamic' feminism and ideas such as gender equality and liberal freedoms that are used to condemn Islam's treatment of women, dismantling the claim that they lay the path to women's liberation from oppression. Alongside this, speakers detailed the correct path to bring true change and real improvement to women's lives. This included discussions on how the comprehensive application of the Islamic Shariah by the Khilafah would solve the multitude of problems that women face today. The event concluded by highlighting the growing international support and political activism amongst Muslim women for the re-establishment of the Khilafah.

This booklet contains the talks delivered during the conference. They detail how it is only the complete application of the Shariah under the Islamic Khilafah system which can establish for women the high status, protection and rights that they deserve and that Allah (swt) has afforded them.

We pray that it will not be long before the daughters of this Ummah will be able to witness and enjoy the fruits of living under this glorious State of the Khilafah Rashidah on the method of the Prophethood once again Insha Allah.

TALK 1
Speech from TUNISIA



Who Determines the Rights of Women in the Muslim World: Shariah or International Law?

In the name of Allah and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah and his family and companions and those who follow Him:

Dear Respected Guests in the countries that we are holding our conference, "Women and Shariah: Separating Fact from Fiction", we greet you wherever you are, as we also extend our greetings to all those following the coverage all over the world, As Salaam Alaikum Wa Rahmatuallah Wa Barakatuhu.

The enemies of Islam have not wasted any effort in confusing people, thus distracting them away from the laws of their Lord, through lying, slandering, and distortion, and women have received a fair share of this, showering a multitude of poisoned arrows targeting Shariah Laws relating to women, because they have a deep awareness of her important role in the family and society. Therefore, it is incumbent to expose these lies and slanders.

Indeed, this March, of this year, is different my dear sisters, the litmus test clearly shows the failure of the experiment of feminism to deliver justice for women. For a whole century feminists have not managed to put matters right or succeed in giving women their so-called rights, and this was expected. How can they serve justice to women when feminism was developed and closely related to the colonialists, wrapped up in its overcoat!! The call of Mustafa Kamal to destroy the Khilafah was accompanied by calls for the emancipation of women, and we all know the close relationship between Mustafa Kamal and malicious Britain; it was also accompanied by colonists' calls in Egypt, Tunisia and other places. In Egypt, for example, Lord Cromer, the British High Commissioner, the official sponsor of the women's movement, was the carrier of the banner of liberation and empowerment for women, while his real purpose was to show that his own civilization is superior, thereby consolidating the intellectual colonization, which is considered more dangerous than military colonization!!

This was one of various styles and numerous means to export Western concepts and laws in order to colonize the countries and the people. There were international treaties and conventions, and conferences and International days. There was also a fierce attack on the ideas of Islam and its laws, especially the social system and everything related to the Muslim woman; portraying Western concepts as the light and whatever opposes it as darkness; they portrayed their way as the system of progress and modernity and whatever opposes it as retardation and backwardness! Moreover, it reached the point that the colonial powers justified their occupation of Muslim lands

and spillage of their pure blood as seeking to liberate Muslim women! The most prominent example of this is George W. Bush's justification of the war on Afghanistan as being the means of liberation of Afghan women from their imprisonment in the houses of the Taliban!!!

Sisters, the West would not have succeeded in marketing its concepts to the Muslim countries without being able to rely on local apparatuses: governmental women's organizations and non-governmental organizations took it upon themselves to implement the West's objectives and adopted all that was promoted of International agreements and treaties, like the protocols of human rights such as the CEDAW Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and others… The West was successful in some endeavors by being able to gain the endorsement and commitment of several countries' in establishing these conventions. Here in Tunisia, for example, the CEDAW Convention has been ratified since 1985 with reservations on some items that are contrary to the Shariah law; while in 2011 the government lifted all reservations. Recently the ratification of the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa, linked to the African Charter on Human and Peoples, took place!! Also recently some articles in the Egyptian constitution were changed that contradict the Islamic Shariah, claiming it is in the interest of women and their freedom! These women were oppressed because of regimes that claim they are Islamic, while in reality customs, traditions and non-Islamic values exist in our countries, east and west. These are the regimes that facilitated the work of the West and its war against Islam and its rules, and rather backed and supported it.

One who looks closely at those international conventions and treaties will realize their violation of the rulings of our Lord; they include Western concepts about women and establish a distinguished societal framework that contradicts the fundamental rules of Islam. They cunningly and deceptively promote these conventions, presenting them as the guarantor of women's rights and gains; and work to modernize the laws to their advantage, until they deceived the women. This saw the rise of what is known as "Islamic feminism"; which attempts to read the Islamic text from a "modern" perspective, according to their claim, to reform the Islamic legal system to fit in with the gains of modernity i.e. with the corrupt Western concepts!!

But Alhamdulilah, my dear sisters; despite the great efforts of the West and its collaborators, the failure of feminism and its conferences, organizations and conventions to achieve their professed goals, has become clearer today more than ever,. We ask them and ask you: Did they really fulfill what they have promised?! Did they liberate women and return her usurped rights?! Did they eradicate or at least ease the problems of poverty, ignorance, disease and violence against women?! Did they achieve the alleged equality or was it just a mirage, as a thirsty person is deceived in thinking it is water?! Did the decisions and recommendations from their conferences and agreements result in beautiful flowers or a stinging bitter taste?! Did it produce happy content families or dysfunctional miserable families?! In their struggle with men, are women content on the grounds of equality and empowerment, or did this struggle increase their strain and suffering and frustration? Did man-made law deliver equity or increase their injustice?! Were their claims about the modernization and reform of the social system, that contradicted the concepts of Islam, a lifeline or a rope of death?!

The answer, my sisters, is clear by looking at the situation of women, which is getting worse with more injustice and suffering. Women's movements against feminism have even emerged; after they tasted the bitter fruits of "equality" and rejected this message, instead carrying slogans such as: "I do not need feminism because I do not see man as an enemy", "I do not need feminism because it destroys the family and fights family traditions", and other loud slogans of rejection of the control of feminism and their monopoly on women's issues. So is there any worse failure beyond this failure?!!

Here arises some questions: Is there another project able to provide justice to women all over the world, that women can embrace!? Is there a project that gives women and men, children and society and all its members their rights without discrimination against the other, where each one knows of their rights and duties within clear, fixed, and fair rulings (Ahkam)?! Are there rulings that take into account the humanitarian aspect within human beings and gives them their rights, and obliges them with duties according to this role so that the wheel of life runs smoothly, easily and pleasantly?!

Indeed my sisters, the great project of Islam is the project, which is emerging day after day as the only political

vision capable of overturning reality and changing it radically, of bringing justice to the whole of humanity by Allah's Mercy and bringing justice to women, of course, because it is from the Lord of humans and their Creator and the One who Knows them:

﴿أَلَا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

"**Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?**" [Al-Mulk: 14]

O Dear Muslim women, elevated by Islam in all parts of the earth; the time has turned and the plots of the West, by the Grace of Allah (swt) are blatantly exposed. Through your awareness and intelligence you can look into matters with a sharp vision and insight. The time has come for you to be on the frontline in the fight against Kufr and its collaborators. It is time that you become the impregnable barrier, which prevents the implementation of their malicious plans and their evil goals. Through the rejection of their agreements and conventions; by rejecting the erroneous concepts and viewpoint on life; and by rejecting the petty issues that they want to become the concern of women.

Our Islam is the clear truth and the message of the Lord of the Worlds, it deserves to be our source of dignity; we must reject all that contradicts it; we must expose what they call reform and the development of the rulings of Islam and confront them! And proclaim loudly in all of the earth: We will not forsake our Islam; will not give it up; we will not depart from it. Stop the distortion and changing of our Deen, we are no longer fooled by your lies and tricks, we are certain that our Islam is the savior and solution for the whole of mankind:

﴿وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ ۚ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا﴾

"**And say, "Truth has come, and falsehood has departed. Indeed is falsehood, [by nature], ever bound to depart**" [Al-Isra: 81]

Wa Asalaam Alaikum Wa Rahmatuallah Wa Barakatuhu





TALK 2
Speech from JORDAN

Dismantling the Narrative of "Islamic Feminism"

Muslim women were granted their full rights without having to resist and fight, and without carrying out marches and strikes for them. Islam and its rulings are equitable to women as human beings first and foremost. She was able to contribute positively and effectively in all aspects of life: political, economic and social, as well as in education and employment. This was at a time when women in the West were suffering the ravages of humiliation, marginalization, and contempt, and did not have any rights to be mentioned, not to mention the poor male treatment of females in the family, society and the church. This prompted women in Western societies to establish a movement for women's rights and the rejection of the so-called male domination. Therefore, what is now known as feminism emerged. One of its definitions is "The theory that calls for equality for both genders, politically, economically and socially, and seeks as a political movement to achieve women's rights and interests and to eliminate gender discrimination and male domination suffered by women."

Some have tried to imitate the solutions for this injustice suffered by Western women through importing feminist ideas and attempting to Islamicize them. This "Islamic feminist theory" seeks to update the view on women by reviewing Islam from a new modern perspective. Margot Badran was the first researcher to use this term in 1999, where she pointed out that religion is not a problem for women, but the problem lies in the way the religion is misinterpreted and misapplied.

Yes sisters, what they call "Islamic feminism" distinguishes between the Qur'an and the Hadeeth. It believes that the Qur'an is more equitable for women regarding the gender, and accuses the Hadeeth of being biased against Muslim women. Therefore, these feminists use the term "Ijtihad" in order to dismantle the religious texts and extract rules and Fatwas that they can resort to, in what they claim is the defense of all women's rights. I.e. they work within the framework of Islam, depending on many linguistic approaches in the interpretation of religious discourse. And here lies the danger my sisters; it is more difficult for Liberal and secular feminists to achieve a similar change, simply because of how they are viewed by others; that they are carrying the thought of the West who came to destroy the principles, morals and religion of the East. Thus the Islamic society is cautious of them, it may even place obstacles in front of any women's project coming from them and will view it with suspicion and mistrust. However "Islamic feminists" are working to impose western feminism but in a very savvy manner; where they are seeking to convince the Muslim men and women that Western feminism is the essence of what Islam calls for, and that therefore there is no reason to resist or criticize it. They claim that these values are a collection of humanitarian modern progressive ideas, which correspond with what was brought by Islam. Several female academics are spearheading this discourse, they have invented this new term

in order for it to be accepted and promoted in the Islamic countries, and this is why we now hear of so-called "Islamic feminism".

Here we recall Amina Wadud who leads worshipers, men and women in prayer in America. She views Islam as not incompatible with freedom, that it does not prohibit thought and does not force women to wear the head cover! In other words, they praise Islam in order to destroy it, and so avoid being accused of treason and being agents of the West. They draft several proposals for the reform of the situation of women, but they use the same language and context so as to fall within the religious framework. As a result of this we are currently witnessing a global movement for the reform of the so-called Islamic personal status laws in favor of women, or so they claim. For example, one of them says, "The rights of women were amputated because of the predominance of the male perspective for several centuries, particular interpretations of the verses of the noble Qur'an that are popular were not always complete and accurate, but were influenced by the male perspective. That is why women are calling upon themselves to strive to read the Noble Qur'an again from a female perspective with a view to defend their rights!"

As for Islam, it is Allah's eternal and final Deen, as it is well known; it is highly concerned with women's issues, even naming one of the longest Chapters "**The Women**" (Surat An-Nisa'). According to an integrated balanced view, Islam has decreed a number of rights matched by a set of obligations and responsibilities. This criteria was introduced by Islam to view the world as neither masculine nor feminine, but as a divine criteria placed by Allah (swt); it means that the human being - male or female – views any issue with this criteria: Is this matter loved and pleasing to Allah or is it detestable and not acceptable to Him?

The discussions about the differences between men and women, and attempts to interpret the verse:

﴿وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَى﴾

"**And the male is not like the female**" [Al-i-Imran: 36], exploration of the causes of differentiation between men and women in matters such as inheritance, in being a witness, blood money, work, education, dress code... and so on, are just irrelevant sophistry of thought. Islam views men and women as equal, without distinguishing between them in terms of both being human, and of which two types were created, male and female:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً﴾

"**O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from one soul and created from it its mate and dispersed from both of them many men and women**" [An-Nisa: 1]

Women are not inferior or superior to men, but they are equal in obligation and in reward and punishment,

﴿فاستجابَ لهُمْ ربُّهم أنِّي لا أُضِيعُ عَمَلَ عاملٍ منكم من ذَكَرٍ أو أُنْثَى بعضُكم من بَعْضٍ﴾

"**And their Lord responded to them, "Never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another**" [Al-i-Imran: 195]

Islam has set for both men and women roles and responsibilities, and each seeks to carry out this role to the fullest in order to please Allah (swt). Allah (swt) says,

﴿وَلَيْسَ الذَّكَرُ كَالْأُنْثَى﴾

"**And the male is not like the female**" [Al-i-Imran: 36]. And He (swt) says,

﴿أَلا يَعْلَمُ مَنْ خَلَقَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

"**Does He who created not know, while He is the Subtle, the Acquainted?**" [Al-Mulk: 14]

We must silence all tongues calling for equality by human standards, whether male or female. A woman's rights are granted to her by Allah Azza wa Jal, women did not demand or fight for their right. There are Ahkam that Allah specified for women and there are Ahkam that Allah specified for man, for a divine reason not mentioned by Allah Almighty. But these differences are definitely not due to any so-called deficiency in the mind of women, meaning

that she is incompetent; if this was the case for women, why did the Prophet (saw) order us to receive our Deen from Aisha (ra)?

From the early days of Islam, women understood their role and objective in life; they were always trying to compete with men to gain the pleasure of Allah Azza wa Jal to win paradise. They concerned themselves with nothing except being careful of not missing or being deprived of an opportunity to gain reward. Competition was not for the greatness of literary prestige, God forbid, these people left all that is precious for the sake of Allah and His Messenger. Some of them emigrated, forsaking prestige and money, and were greeted by their brothers to share with them their possessions, however large or small, so that the Glory remains to Allah and His Messenger and the believers.

Since the early days of Islam, women were not concerned about the Islamic view towards them or thought that men were preferred over them, because Islam honors women. But when they distanced themselves away from Islam and did not find the system of Islam completely implemented, many misconceptions were able to prevail. We ask Allah Almighty for the return of the rulings of Islam to be implemented in the State of the guided Khilafah on the method of Prophethood and to eliminate everything that is contrary to Islam.

Wa Salaam Alaikum Wa Rahmatullah Wa Barakatuhu



TALK 3
Speech from the
Central Media Office of
Hizb ut Tahrir –
Delivered from the UK



Dispelling the Media Myths against Women and the Shariah

INTRODUCTION

Dear sisters and distinguished guests, in the 1870's, French administrators trying to strengthen France's colonial rule over parts of the Muslim world recommended that French men marry Arab women. A supporter of this policy stated, "It is through women that we can get hold of the soul of a people".

The colonialists realised that within Muslim societies, women are the centre of the family, the backbone of communities, and the nurturers of children. If you capture their hearts and their minds, you capture the spirit of present and future Muslim generations, creating advocates for your beliefs, and supporters of your rule. Western rulers therefore sought to get hold of the soul of the Muslim woman by shaping her tastes according to their values; convincing her to view her Islamic history through their eyes; and moulding her hopes and aspirations through their dreams.

And over successive generations, it is the media that functioned as one of their greatest tools in achieving this aim. For it served as a mirror to that soul; not by providing a true reflection of the Muslim woman's status in her Deen – for if it had, it would have shown her as embracing a system which exemplified protection of her dignity and wellbeing, one that elevated her status within societies, and pioneered the political, economic, educational and legal rights she enjoyed, centuries ahead of Western civilizations today.

No! The secular media concealed this truthful reflection of the position of women in the Shariah. Instead, it constructed a distorted ugly image of her identity as a Muslim woman and her mistreatment under Islam, based upon lies and myths – that she was imprisoned, enslaved, consigned to second-class status, and the subject of violence. The words 'victim' and 'veiled' became synonymous; and the covered Muslim woman came to represent to many the visible symbol of Islam's oppression of women.

This false image led to many Muslim women becoming ashamed of their Islamic culture, despising their Islamic history, and fearing the return of Islamic rule, while also being enticed by the secular, liberal lifestyle, culture and system, viewing it as the path to dignified lives. It also intensified the suspicion and hatred amongst non-Muslim communities towards Islam. All this aided secular governments, in the East and West to pursue their agenda of weakening the attachment of Muslims to their Islamic beliefs and to remove Islam from public

life by manufacturing consent amongst their public for hijab and niqab bans and other oppressive policies against Muslims, as well as to invade Muslim lands for political interests – all in the name of saving Muslim women from their so-called 'oppressive' Islamic culture.

Gema Martin Munoz, Professor of Sociology of the Arab and Islamic World at Autonoma University of Madrid wrote in an article entitled, 'Islam's women under Western eyes', "The media not only constitutes almost the sole source of information for the images and attitudes that they create. They also perpetuate historically inherited stereotypes and cultural imaginaries that form part of the national collective memory bank."

Dear sisters, these inherited stereotypes and false cultural imaginaries of Muslim women and their status in Islam cannot go unchallenged. Such lies should not be the dominant voice in the media discourses on women and Shariah. They must be dismantled and discarded. To do this requires for us to first recognise the main sources from which the media fiction regarding the Shariah's subjugation of women arise.

BREAKING THE ORIENTALIST MYTHS REGARDING WOMEN UNDER THE UTHMANI KHILAFAH

One of these main sources is the age-old Western orientalist myths regarding the treatment of women under the Uthmani Khilafah state.

For centuries, the writings and paintings of Western orientalists, historians, and politicians portrayed the position of women under the rule of the Uthmani Khilafah as one of servitude, imprisonment, and enslavement to men. Sensationalist, fictitious books such as "1001 Arabian Nights" – as well as the works of European travellers and artists presented Ottoman society as a lustful place, where women were helpless chattels of their husbands, captives in their homes, and treated as mere objects to provide pleasure for men. Nowhere symbolised this more for the Western mind than the 'Harem' that became the most fertile space of orientalist imagination. Scenes depicting it as a place of sexual indulgence, with women imprisoned and paraded for male gratification were played out on the pages of books and the canvases of paintings– all of which was attributed to the Shariah and Islamic rule.

For centuries, these European descriptions of the 'Exotic East', shaped Western attitudes towards the status of women under the Shariah laws. They were repeated endlessly and perpetuated on the cinema and TV screens of the 20th and 21st century, becoming part of popular culture and ingrained into the psyché of many in the West as well as many Muslims.

It is these depictions that came to define many of the modern-day media accusations against specific Islamic social laws. The niqab for example, that has been described by the media as a garment of imprisonment and seclusion, that makes the woman voiceless and invisible – is viewed as almost an extension of the walls of that jail-like harem as pictured by orientalists, as is gender segregation that has been labelled as 'gender apartheid' and as another means of secluding women from society.

However, in truth, these orientalist depictions of the Uthmani Khilafah were mere figments of European imagination. They were in the main, works of Western male writers and artists who were never allowed to have close interaction with Ottoman women, nor enter the harem due to the strict segregation of the genders that was implemented under the State. It was therefore virtually impossible for male foreigners to give a first-hand account of women's lives in an Ottoman harem or household.

However, the writings of female European travellers who were able to have closer contact with Ottoman women and enter their harems to witness directly their lives, paint a very different picture to the descriptions of these male orientalists. They rejected the idea that women under the Uthmani Khilafah were imprisoned, enslaved, and degraded human beings; rather they witnessed the converse. M. De M. D'Ohsson, an Armenian woman who worked for many years in the Swedish Embassy in Turkey during the 18th century stated regarding the Uthmani Khilafah, "Anyone who behaves badly towards a woman, regardless of his position or religion, cannot escape punishment, because religion generally commands women to be respected. For this reason both the police and judges deal very severely with anyone who ill-treats women."

These female European writers also refuted the claim the harems were places where women were imprisoned, describing them instead as simply the living quarters of women within a household, and detailing how women were free to leave them for leisure activities or to seek redress of violations to their rights through the courts. They also disputed accusations of harems being places of sexual depravity where women were displayed for male pleasure, describing instead the piety and high regard for purity in the interaction between men and women in the Muslim Ottoman household. They told of how men strictly adhered to rules relating to the female-only environment of the harem to the extent that the husband of a Muslim woman, even if he was the Khalifah would not think of entering into the harem of his own home if he saw women's slippers at the harem door, which indicated that there were female guests visiting.

An examination of the judicial records of the Uthmani Khilafah, also paint a very different picture of the lives of women under its Islamic laws than that depicted by the fantasies of Western orientalists. In the 1970's, an American history professor, R. C. Jennings conducted extensive research on more than 10,000 Ottoman court records from the 17th century. They reveal that women used the courts regularly to defend their personal and property rights, that they were protected from violence and forced marriages, were financially maintained by their husbands and families, could initiate divorce, and had their dowry and inheritance rights protected. In addition, they had the same economic rights as men and were able to manage their wealth and economic affairs independently of male relatives. This included the right to buy and sell property, run a business, form contracts, invest their wealth, and hold managerial positions in businesses run by others.

Despite all this sisters, the century-old lies of the oppression of women under the Shariah laws of the Uthmani Khilafah continue to form the basis upon which numerous journalists and media formulate their arguments regarding Islam's mistreatment of women. They are also replicated in modern-day dramas, films, historical documentaries and writings – even in Turkey where a number of recent shows regarding various sultans have gained great popularity and have been exported across the Muslim world, even though their scripts are cut and paste of the myths of Western orientalists and colonialists.

These historical portrayals of Muslim women's subjugation by Islam are also echoed in another modern-day phenomenon – the birth of a genre of memoirs written by Muslim and ex-Muslim women accounting their personal stories of escaping oppression for which they blamed Islam. The narratives of historical works of fiction have therefore today been etched into the storylines of what are being marketed as works of fact! These books and films have exploded in popularity over the last 2 decades, flooding bookshops and selling in their millions in the Muslim and non-Muslim world. Whether it's Ayan Hirsi's, 'The Caged Virgin', or the 'Princess' trilogy about the subjugated life of a Saudi Princess, or the book 'Sold' that tells the story of 2 girls forced into marriage in Yemen, or even the biography of Malala Yousafzai – it's the same message that is amplified again, and again, and again – that Muslim women need saving from Islam. And it's the secular media that is providing the megaphone. Indeed, such media have created celebrities of this genre of authors, providing them extensive airtime and huge press space to peddle their stories and publicise their books, giving them a free reign to present their individual personal experiences resulting from non-Islamic customs as the general norm of women's lives under the Shariah, and that vast numbers of Muslim women resent their Islamic culture. And all this has been re-enforced by the relentless sensationalist media coverage of forced marriages, honour killings, and other oppressive non-Islamic practices in Muslim communities which have been linked to the Shariah; or stories of women's subjugation under non-Islamic regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Iran and Sudan which are falsely paraded as templates of Islamic governance – re-iterating the dominant narrative that the Shariah oppresses women.

The truth therefore appears to have been branded as irrelevant in all this. Sisters, this new age literature and media productions based upon gender orientalism and historical fabrications and fantasies do not belong in the bookstores or TV screens of our lands. They belong in the dustbin of history!

DISMANTLING SECULAR ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE ISLAMIC SOCIAL LAWS

Dear sisters, the other main source from which the media fiction regarding the Shariah's subjugation of

women arises is their whole approach by which Islamic social laws are examined and judged. Individual Islamic rulings are cherry picked, their context ignored, and then their meanings misinterpreted using a host of wild assumptions to come to the conclusion that the Shariah oppresses women; while conveniently overlooking the high status and unrivalled rights Islam affords women, as well as the positive impact that Islam's social laws have when implemented as a whole upon women, children, family life, and society.

So for example, the media says that Islamic inheritance laws are discriminatory against women because the sister receives half the share of her brother – while ignoring the fact that in Islam the man is obliged to provide for his wife and children, as well as his sisters and extended family if required while the woman is not expected to spend a penny of her wealth on others, even if she is rich – yet Islam still grants her a share of the inheritance! Subhanallah! Or they say that polygamy is unjust to women, even though a man is obliged to take financial and physical care of each of his wives equally, and to treat them with kindness and love. However, there is no condemnation that adultery has become the norm within liberal states, where it is perfectly legal for a man to have relations with countless women while taking no responsibility for them or the children they father.

Or some journalists say that the differences in certain rights and roles of men and women in Islam – for example in testimony, marital duties, or the woman not being permitted to be a ruler – implies that Islam views women as being inferior to men in worth or intellect, while ignoring the fact that Allah (swt) said,

﴿وَٱللَّهُ جَعَلَ لَكُم مِّنۡ أَنفُسِكُمۡ أَزۡوَٰجٗا﴾

"**And Allah has made for you mates of your own nature…**" [An-Nahl: 72]

And that the Prophet (saw) said, «إِنَّمَا النِّسَاءُ شَقَائِقُ الرِّجَالِ»"**Assuredly, women are the twin halves of men**." They disregard the fact that numerous women transmitted hadiths from the Prophet (saw) which form part of the Sunnah – one of the four main sources of extracting Islamic rulings. Historically under Islamic rule, women played an essential role in the development, transmission and preservation of Islamic sciences, fiqh and hadith, contributing to the richness of Islamic culture and scholarship; that there were thousands of female scholars under the Khilafah some of whom were teachers of eminent male scholars such as Imam Malik, Imam Shafi'i, and Ibn Taymiyyah, and that they lectured in the prestigious colleges and mosques of their time – such as Umm Darda in the 7th century AD who taught hadith at the Great Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, the capital of the Khilafah at the time, one of her students being the Khalifah of the state, or Aishah bint Abd-al-Hadi who in the 9th century was appointed to the post of principal teacher of Sahih al-Bukhari in the Grand Mosque of Banu Umayyah - so after all of this, how do they dare to claim that the Shariah views the worth and intellect of the woman to be deficient to the man?

And finally, the media claims that the Shariah orders women to cover up, and enforces gender segregation, and other social laws that limit the relationship between men and women because it views women as evil, sexual temptresses that are a cause of fitnah for men and need to be secluded from society; while they blindly ignore the fact that within capitalist liberal states, the beauty, entertainment, and pornography industries have marketed the idea of the woman as a sexual temptress, exploiting her feminine charms, and presenting her as a seductress for the sake of profit.

Islam in contrast, describes the woman as 'muhsana' – a fortress against Shaytan, who is able to keep her husband upright in his behavior and completes half his Deen. Additionally, under Islamic rule, countless eminent male scholars held their female teachers in high regard, praising them for their piety, virtuous conduct, and integrity. This is because, unlike Western Christian societies historically, Islam rejects the view that women are 'sexual temptresses' or 'instruments of the devil' causing men to go astray. No! Rather the Qur'an states,

﴿وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنُونَ وَٱلۡمُؤۡمِنَٰتُ بَعۡضُهُمۡ أَوۡلِيَآءُ بَعۡضٖۚ يَأۡمُرُونَ بِٱلۡمَعۡرُوفِ وَيَنۡهَوۡنَ عَنِ ٱلۡمُنكَرِ﴾

"**And the believers, men and women, are guardians one of another; they enjoin the right and forbid the wrong**" [TMQ At-Taubah: 71], thereby holding men and women equally responsible for protecting society from corruption. And as for the accusation that these social laws encourage the seclusion of women, then how

do they explain the fact that women had an active role in the politics, economics, education and general life of the society under the rule of the Prophet (saw) while also abiding resolutely to their Islamic dress and other Shariah rulings?

Indeed, what such media seems determined to ignore is that unlike the irrational liberal ideology, Islam recognizes that men and women have the potential of provoking the sexual desire in each other. Therefore it sets down strict laws and limits, to direct the fulfillment of the sexual instinct to marriage alone and hence to that which benefits rather than harms society. So the Islamic social laws, rather than secluding women, or hindering the interaction of men and women, facilitates it by ensuring healthy cooperation between the genders in all spheres of life, based upon mutual respect and not marred by sexual distractions. This is in addition to protecting the family unit, and hence the rights of women, men, and children alike. What a stark contrast this is to the 'free-for all' liberal societies with their personal and sexual freedoms that have devastated family life, ruined the lives of children and reaped social and moral chaos within their societies.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion sisters, the secular media has created its own prison for the Muslim woman, unwilling to hear our voices, attempting to cage and contain us within the four walls of an outdated false narrative that we feel oppressed by our Deen, seek protection from our Islamic culture and Islamic rule, and yearn for salvation through the Western liberal lifestyle and system. It is therefore down to us dear sisters to break the bars of that jail, to no longer accept for others to speak on our behalf about how we think and feel about Islam; or to allow these lies to continue to be the lens through which the world views us and our status in the Shariah – lies which are used to implement oppressive anti-Islamic policies, or invade our Muslim lands, or fight the resumption of the Islamic Khilafah state – all supposedly in our name!

Winston Churchill, the former British Prime Minister once said, "Sometimes the truth is so precious, it must be accompanied by a bodyguard of lies." So sisters, let us not let the truth about the beautiful, unrivalled status that the Shariah affords women to be concealed by this blanket of deceit, nor accept for our Deen to be condemned and accused without coming to its defence. Let us strive to get our voices heard and our opinions known in the mainstream media – in discussion shows, in the papers, and in news outlets; or set up and support our own Islamic media – in real life or online, as well as effectively utilize social media to fight this propaganda and make the truth known. But in a manner where we never ever become apologetic for our beliefs, or shy away from being frank about our values, or let others steer the direction of the discussion. But rather to dismantle the absurd accusations, while also raising a 21st century debate, away from pieces of cloth and isolated Islamic laws to the true causes of women's oppression and what set of values and laws can truly secure respect and rights for women. And never, ever underestimate what your contribution to this debate can achieve sisters – for just the image of a Muslim woman raising her opinions confidently in the media, saying that she feels empowered and respected by her Islamic beliefs, is enough to undermine a mountain of lies. So sisters, the media may want to use us in the frontline of their propaganda attack against Islam; but it is us who can and must be in the frontline of the struggle to present the truth of our Deen. Allah (swt) says,

﴿يُرِيدُونَ أَن يُطْفِـُٔوا۟ نُورَ ٱللَّهِ بِأَفْوَٰهِهِمْ وَيَأْبَى ٱللَّهُ إِلَّآ أَن يُتِمَّ نُورَهُۥ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ ٱلْكَٰفِرُونَ﴾

"They desire to extinguish the light of Allah with their mouths but Allah will not allow it to happen, for He seeks to perfect His light even though the disbelievers may dislike it." [TMQ At-Taubah: 32]

Dr. Nazreen Nawaz

Member of the Central Media Office of Hizb ut Tahrir

TALK 4
Speech from PALESTINE



Clarification of the Status of Women in Light of the Unique Islamic Social System

Alhamdulillah Rab al-Alameen, peace and blessings upon His noble Messenger,

We are gathered in this beautiful conference, which is being held simultaneously across continents, to speak about women and Shariah, and distinguishing between fact and fiction. Due to the absence of arbitration using the Shariah of Allah, matters have become jumbled, and fact is no longer known from fiction!

Onlookers of the situation of women and her issues today find her a humiliated and dishonored woman, whose rights and willpower have been consumed. She does not know of her legitimate (Sharii') right except for a fraction of what it is… lost among people who do not know anything of Islam but its name and between the courts which apply provisions upon her that are not from Islam in any form. However if we look to the court's halls, we find women's issues aplenty and a variety of cases still waiting to be resolved, such as inheritance, divorce, custody, financial maintenance (Nafaqa) and other issues. With these often lasting years in courts. And if we were to search for the cause of this shortfall, we find that the flaw is in the basis used for the treatment... For neither conferences, nor women's organizations, meetings, demonstrations, or man-made laws have been able to treat these problems or produce the alleged change in the status of women today. This is because, as we have mentioned, they are based on a flawed foundation that is not founded on any intellectual basis, has no upright methodology to follow, and fails to make the ridha (satisfaction) of Allah a measure for actions as it should be, since Allah Almighty created the human being and He knows his needs and necessities. Thus, through the extrapolation of the Shariah rulings, which are derived from the Quran and Sunnah, and emanate from the Islamic Aqeedah and agree with human instincts and needs, we find the highest of attention is given to women. She is beloved since her childhood… for the Prophet (saw) forbade disliking her, as he (saw) said: «لا تكرَهوا البنات فإنهن المؤنسات الغاليات» "**Do not hate girls, for they are the sources of delight and the valuable [ones]**." And she is honored and revered when she is old; as a mother, wife, sister, aunt and grandmother; and in all stages of her life... This is in additional to males not being favored over her, unlike what we see today. Today the favoring of boys over girls is common as is the poor treatment of girls, which is not from the teachings of Islam and its rulings, which oblige fairness in treating her, and prohibited favoring man over her. Ibn Abbas narrated that the Messenger (saw) said,

«سووا بين أولادكم في العطية، فلو كنت مفضلاً أحداً لفضلت النساء» "**Equalize between your children in gifts, for if I was to favor anyone I would have favored the women**".

And here we say, to those who allege the necessity of women going out to work, on the pretext of "economic empowerment" and financial independence and equality, we say to them that Islam relieved her from this hardship and distress, and made it obligatory on her guardian (Wali) to maintain her financially, and this is not as a favor or as a form of gratitude from him. Rather it is from the viewpoint of guardianship (qawameh) and care. Thus Islam did not limit guardianship with what it ordained on men, as only the obligation to provide for the family, but in all the requisites of taking care of life's affairs, at the same time the woman takes care of the house affairs; dignified and honored. Thus, each has their role, and if the two roles clash, the household becomes a conflicted area instead of being an oasis of comfort, security and tranquility...

Meanwhile it is permitted for her to work in various fields, while remaining committed to the rulings of her Lord. And it has allowed her to own money, land, and so on through any of the legitimate (Sharii') means of ownership, without it being obligated upon her to spend from her money, even on herself. However, what do we see these days my sisters? Do we see this depiction of women implemented and actually existing! No, by Allah it is not, as she is forced to go out to work and earn her living. And there are those who deprive her of returning to her work, so they seize her money and salary and deny her even the right to dispose of it. The Messenger of Allah (saw) said, «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُحَرِّجُ مَالَ الضَّعِيفَيْنِ: الْيَتِيمِ وَالْمَرْأَةِ» "**I have issued a warning concerning the rights of two weak groups: orphans and women**." (i.e. he has forbidden those from oppressing her).

My Honorable Sisters:

Islam is not a novelty or a philosophy to remain in books awaiting an explorer to read its pages, but was implemented for a period of 13 centuries; as an actual, practical and distinctive system that exalted women, and in which they rejoiced, while today the moans of women fill the Earth and space, but no one responds!!

Indeed ... women under it walked confidently in a cloak of honor, dignity and justice, such as the implementation of her receiving her rightful share of inheritance; for as we know the mother, wife, sister, daughter, and alike, each have a certain share as detailed in their respective positions. Her right is fixed and it is prohibited to deprive her of it out of selfishness or on the pretext of obsolete customs and traditions that are contrary to Shariah, such as the claim that males have more right over it since they are the ones who invested and increased the wealth. Or that if she inherits, the wealth will go to a foreign family, while her brothers are more deserving of it than the stranger since it is their father's wealth! And if it happened that she demanded her right or resorted to the courts to obtain it, she becomes an ungrateful rebellious woman in the eyes of her family and the society, as one who sold her men for money. So by Allah... by what right and by which law does this occur before the eyes and ears of the courts and the man-made laws that cannot restore this right to her? By what right is she deprived the right given to her by the Lord of the humans!

We come to another issue, in which we see and sense the extent of the injustice done to women in the absence of the laws of Islam; which is marriage, where we see a number of parents impose conditions on the one who wants to marry their daughters, far from those conditions urged by Islam such as his Deen (piety) and morals. Instead, they care about his wealth, prestige and status, unconcerned by the girl's opinion. Worse still is the one who prevents his daughter or sister from marriage due to greed and the wish to have control over her money and income, and Allah Almighty says: ﴿فلا تعضلوهن﴾ "**Do not prevent them (to marry)**"]Al-Baqara: 232[. And others who deny the girl her rightful dowry and take it for themself instead of giving it to her as described by the Shariah.

We all know that marriage is an oasis of tranquility if both spouses apply the Shariah rulings. Rulings that conveyed to the husband numerous commandments that preserve the wife's dignity, in which the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, «خيركم خيركم لأهله وأنا خيركم لأهلي» "**The best of you is he who is the best to his family and I am the best among you to my family**". It also illustrated to the women that the righteous wife is from the group of Paradise, may Allah make us all of its people...

However, if marriage could not continue between the two parties and they were forced to resort to the most hated halal, then it is stated: ﴿فإمساك بمعروف أو تسريح بإحسان﴾. "**Either keep [her] in an acceptable manner or release [her] with good treatment.**" [Al-Baqara: 229[. And so if they are to separate, each obtains his or her rights from the other party without iniquity. But in the absence of Islam being applied in life and under man-made laws and

the unjust judiciary we see spectacles; we witness a woman compelled to demand divorce, but years pass and she is bewildered wandering between the courts; neither the husband divorcing her nor the court resolving her case, and she becomes, as it is said, like a house in limbo. And even if he eventually divorces her, it is only after she surrenders her full rights, including the right of custody of her children!! This, by Allah, is an injustice and a great injustice! Whereas, if the provisions of Islam are applied she would have her rights; honored and dignified, not humiliated and wounded!

Amongst the rules that Allah has ordained and that have been the focus of major attacks in order to discredit it, is the ruling on polygamy, which is included in the permissible (Mubah) actions. It is a treatment for various problems and a protection of the society from the prevalence of vice and immorality. However, the enduring distortion surrounding it and its rejection by the society has made it a scarecrow that worries many women. Whereas an American woman described it by saying, "Polygamy in a fourth day in the care of God is better than mistresses in the blackness of the night in the care of the devil".

As mentioned earlier, my sisters, it wholly appears that nothing in the Shariah texts hinders women's march to embrace the means for human dignity, or of pursuing the development of a beneficial life towards its finest prospects. We find that the Shariah has uniquely protected her by ring-fencing her provisions, has made her honored during all stages of her life, and did not make equality her obsession. This is because it is a system beyond the conflict of masculinity and feminine; a Divine system that protected the legitimate rights of women.

On the issue of women needing liberation through evidence and inference; you will not find liberation supported by evidence and inference except as stated in the Islamic law where it protected her dignity and well-being, taking into account her innate willingness and natural disposition...placing solutions and treatments for all her problems by referencing the Quran and the Sunnah. So remember the saying of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) in the Farewell Pilgrimage: «يا أيها الناس! تركت فيكم ما إن تمسكتم به لن تضلوا بعدي أبداً؛ كتاب الله وسنتي» "**O people! I have left among you that which if you hold fast to it, you shall never go astray, the Book of Allah and my Sunnah**."

Honorable Sisters:

Muslim women have the right to boast and brag to the women of the world of the honour afforded her by Islam. So beware my sisters, not to exchange what is better for what is inferior. You are the women who raises men and creates heroes. You are the one who can have a political role, choosing the ruler and accounting him.

To complement our duty towards you, O sisters, we from this platform, from this distinguished conference… from Palestine: the Land of Israa' and Mi'raj, from Jerusalem, from the land of the father of the Prophets, from the outskirts of Akka compelling enemies, from the shores of Jaffa and Haifa, we proclaim to women all over the world, and say it aloud and proudly, Sister! Mother!... what will restore your right, what will restore your dignity, what will restore your integrity, and what will restore your true freedom, your security and your original role, which is your motherhood, what will restore all this - is the Khilafah... What will lift the injustice from you - is the Khilafah... By it you will return as you were; honored, respected and protected, armies will be mobilized to defend you, and the Khaleefah will rush to help you.

I give you good tidings my sisters; the second Khilafah Rashidah on the method of the Prophethood, is at the doors, by the will of Allah. And it is the one that will apply the Shariah rules, through which we will achieve our rights and our pursued prosperity, Allah willing…

O women of the best nation raised from the people, the granddaughters of Asmaa, Al-Khansaa and Umm Ommara, we invite you to work with us. So that we can attain splendor in both realms… and return the legacy of the great female companions (Sahabiyat) who adhered to the order of Allah the Almighty, who worked to spread His Deen, and offered their most cherished and precious for the elevation of Islam...

Hasten to the arbitration of the Shariah of Allah, and the making of a better tomorrow for Muslim women and the entire Ummah, and we ask that it may be soon.

Wa Salaamu Alaikuna wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatahu



A Vision of Muslim Women's Lives under the Shariah of Islam

Dearest sisters, the complicated and miserable problems experienced by women today under the democratic-capitalist system and all other man-made systems will end by the implementation of laws based on the Shariah of Islam. The poverty, violence, exploitation, and lack of proper educational, legal and political rights suffered by tens of millions of women in Indonesia and hundreds of millions of women across the Muslim world can only be stopped by the application of Islamic laws in our lands under the Islamic Khilafah State.

The Khilafah will achieve all this through its political, economic, educational, judicial, social and other systems which embody a host of laws and policies extracted from the Shariah of Islam which when implemented in a comprehensive manner will work in an integrated way to secure the high status, privileges, and good standard of living for women which Islam defines as their God-given right. Partial implementation of the Shariah or placing trust in any man-made system to improve the lives of women, as seen in the last nine decades following the destruction of the Khilafah, only provides false hope and broken promises. The systems, laws and policies of the future Khilafah have been detailed comprehensively in the extensive literature of Hizb ut Tahrir and are embodied in a draft constitution for the state which the party has published. In my talk today, I would like to provide a brief insight into how the implementation of the Shariah under the Khilafah would practically solve three common and widespread problems affecting women today.

(1) How the Khilafah will Lift Women from Poverty and Provide them Welfare:

Firstly, how will the Khilafah lift women from poverty and provide them a good standard of living? The Khilafah is obliged to ensure that every citizen, male and female, Muslim and non-Muslim has their basic needs met as well as establish economic prosperity for its people to better their lives financially, for the Prophet (saw) says, «لَيْسَ لابْنِ آدَمَ حَقٌّ فِي سِوى هَذِهِ الخِصَال: بَيْتٌ يَسْكُنُهُ، وَثَوْبٌ يُوَارِي عَوْرَتَهُ وَجِلْفُ الخُبْز، وَالمَاءِ» "The son of man has no better right than that he would have a house wherein he may live, a piece of cloth by which he can hide his nakedness, a piece of bread and some water."

This the Khilafah achieves through laws and policies of the unique Islamic economic system that ensure the effective and fair distribution and circulation of wealth. This includes the prohibition of riba (or interest) and

hoarding of wealth which concentrates wealth in the hands of the few. This prohibition frees up wealth in the society and incentivizes individuals to spend and to invest in business rather than just to place their money in banks, hence generating employment. The state will also therefore immediately end the strangulating debt burden caused by the interest from IMF and other foreign loans, freeing up billions to spend on lifting its citizens from poverty and investing in good public education, healthcare and other services for its men and women alike.

The Khilafah also prohibits the privatisation of natural resources such as oil, gas, minerals, and water so that all benefit from these valuable assets, for the Prophet (saw) said, «المسلمون شركاء في ثلاث، في الماء، الْكَلَأِ، والنار»

"**Muslim People are partners in three: the water, the green pastures, and the fire**."

The State would therefore invest in development projects to extract natural resources from our lands. This would not only create jobs for many people in the public sector but the billions made from the sale of these resources globally would be spent again on public services and the needs of the people. The State would also endeavor to create a healthy and conducive business environment, for example by having a low taxation system that taxes excess wealth rather than imposing heavy taxes on individuals and businesses. This would remove the crippling taxes currently in force in our countries which is impoverishing the people, as well as increase disposable income - encouraging spending, investment, and expansion of businesses. Additionally, the Khilafah would provide technical assistance, land, farming equipment or even capital to those who lack money, expertise, or other means to make a living, enabling them for example to start a business or farm their land. The Prophet (saw) for example as head of the state in Madinah once gave two dirhams to a man and said, «كل بأحدهما واشتر بالآخر فأسا واعمل به» "**Eat with one dirham, and the rest, buy an axe, then use it for work**."

Such Islamic economic policies would therefore generate many jobs within the Khilafah, enabling men to provide good lives for their families and taking women out of poverty. Indeed, the state is obliged to guarantee employment for all its male citizens. Article 153 of Hizb ut Tahrir's Draft Constitution of Al-Khilafah states, "The State should guarantee work for all subjects holding citizenship of the State."

Additionally, under the Khilafah, any woman who is not provided for adequately by her husband or male relative can seek redress through the courts. Furthermore, the Khilafah must provide financial support through the Baitul Mal (the Central Treasury) for those women who have no provider, for the Prophet (saw) said,

«مَنْ تَرَكَ مَالاً فَلأَهْلِهِ وَمَنْ تَرَكَ دَيْنًا أَوْ ضَيَاعًا فَإِلَيَّ وَعَلَيَّ» "**If somebody dies (among the Muslims) leaving some property, the property will go to his heirs; and if he leaves a debt or dependents, we will take care of them.**" Islamic rule therefore guarantees for women financial security and ensures that they are never left to suffer financial hardship or fend for themselves and their children.

Furthermore, it is only the Khilafah that can optimize the collection of Zakat and management of Sadaqa and distribute them effectively to the poor. Economist Habib Ahmed, Chair in Islamic Law and Finance at the Institute of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at Durham University calculated that if all potential `zakat' were collected in Muslim countries, between a third and half of them could move their poor out of poverty. With regards to public needs such as education, healthcare and other services, the state is obliged to provide them at a good standard for its citizens – male and female - and free of charge. The Khilafah will provide free education at primary and secondary levels to both boys and girls will also strive to fund free higher-level education for men and women to the best of its ability. It will therefore invest heavily in the founding and maintaining of adequate numbers of schools, colleges and universities throughout its provinces, striving to eradicate illiteracy and encouraging women to enter higher studies and facilitating their specialization in various fields, including the Islamic disciplines, medicine, science, languages and engineering. All this will be financed through state-owned assets and the results of the management of public property and resources. As we know, Muslim countries, including Indonesia, are extremely rich in natural resources. As an example, two oil and gas blocks in Indonesia (Tangguh and Mahakam) are worth 4000 trillion Indonesian Rupiah (around $320 million), while Indonesia's national budget in 2014 was only 1816 trillion Rupiah, and around 75% of this

came from taxes. If this is the worth of just 2 oil and gas blocks, then how about the worth of the 37 oil and gas blocks which Indonesia has in addition to the resources from its abundant forests and surrounding sea? All of this is more than sufficient to generate adequate welfare for every woman in Indonesia. And the same can be said of so many of our Muslim lands which are blessed with abundant wealth and which when united under the Khilafah can lift the women across the region from poverty.

With all this in place, there should be no need for a single woman to have to beg on the streets, or struggle in exploitative, dangerous, back-breaking jobs as seen in the garment industry in Indonesia, Pakistan, or Bangladesh, or work as migrant workers in foreign lands with the risk of inhuman violations, even the threat of losing their lives. Furthermore, its healthy economic environment will enable women to seek respectable jobs and have an active economic life if they wish. For example, they could be doctors, lecturers, journalists, engineers, directors of a companies, civil servants, judges and much more all permitted by Islam.

(2) How the Khilafah will Protect Women from Violence:

Secondly sisters, how will the Khilafah protect women from violence and violations of their dignity? Well, within the Khilafah, the protection of women's honour and security will be placed as a key pillar of state policy as obliged by Islam. Article 112 of Hizb ut Tahrir's Draft Constitution for the Khilafah states, "She (the woman) is an honour ('ird) that must be protected." So the Khilafah will use its political, educational and media systems as well as all other avenues at its disposal to promote widely and intensively the view of respect towards women within its society. This is in accordance to the numerous Islamic evidences that oblige men to treat women well, for Allah (swt) says, ﴿وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ﴾ "**And live with them (women) honourably.**" [TMQ An-Nisa: 19], and the Prophet (saw) said, «ما أكرمهن إلا كريم وما أهانهن إلا لئيم» "**None but a noble man treats women in an honorable manner, and none but an ignorant treats women disgracefully.**" The State's education system that builds the Islamic personality as well as the Khilafah's promotion of taqwa (God-consciousness) within society will also nurture mentalities of accountability and responsibility in the manner by which men view and treat women. Additionally, the Khilafah prohibits any form of violence, exploitation, or objectification of women or any other action that degrades their status. Through its educational and judicial system the Khilafah will also strive to eradicate cultural attitudes that devalue women or rob them of their Islamic rights, as well as eliminate oppressive traditional practices such as forced marriages and honour killings. It will also prohibit the influx of any ideas, images, books, magazines, or music into its society that cheapen the status of women or promote a hedonistic lifestyle that exacerbates violence and abuse against women.

In addition to all this, the Islamic social system, which regulates the interaction between men and women, provides a framework by which to practically protect the dignity of women: firstly, by preserving a pure relationship between the genders which establishes a productive, healthy cooperation between men and women in all fields of life; and secondly, by creating a chaste and pure environment where sexual desires are fulfilled in a manner that brings goodness to society rather than harm. All this helps to maintain an atmosphere of immense respect towards women, minimising violence and other crimes against them. And finally, the Khilafah will implement Islam's harsh punishments for any form of abuse against women including for violence and rape. These penal laws include lashing for slander or the death-penalty for other crimes against their dignity.

(3) How the Khilafah will Secure the Political Rights of Women:

And finally sisters, how will the Khilafah secure the political rights of women in the Muslim world which they have been robbed of for decades under dictatorships and democracies alike? Well, under the Khilafah, women will have the same political rights and obligations as men. This is in accordance to Islamic evidences that command Muslim men and women to have an active role in the politics of their society, for example, the Prophet (saw) said, addressing men and women,

«كَلاَّ وَاللَّهِ لَتَأْمُرُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَلَتَنْهَوُنَّ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَلَتَأْخُذُنَّ عَلَى يَدَيِ الظَّالِمِ وَلَتَأْطُرُنَّهُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ أَطْرًا وَلَتَقْصُرُنَّهُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ قَصْرًا»

"**Nay, by Allah, you have to enjoin the Ma'ruf and forbid the Munkar, and to hold against the hand of**

the tyrant, and to force him on the truth truly and to limit him to the truth really, otherwise Allah will hit the hearts of some of you against others, then He will curse you as He cursed them". The Khilafah will provide women multiple avenues to raise grievances against the state, account their ruler, or express their political opinions. Article 20 of Hizb ut Tahrir's Draft Constitution for the Khilafah states, "Calling upon the rulers to account for their actions is both a right for the Muslims and a fard kifaayah (collective duty) upon them." Therefore, within the Khilafah women can be members of political parties, raise their views in an independent media, or establish media outlets without the need for a license. They will have the right to be elected representatives of councils which advise and account governors and the Khalifah in all matters of the state. Indeed, Islamic history is awash with examples that highlight how the political opinions of women are valued under the Shariah. For example, Umar bin Al-Khattab (ra), the second Khalifah of Islam would gather men and women in the mosque and seek their opinions on various matters. He would also consult a woman called Al-Shifa bint Abdullah on various political matters due to her intelligence and insight, often giving preference to her opinions over others. Additionally, the Khilafah will give women their Islamic right to elect their representatives and the Khalifah, as well as raise complaints against rulers or officials of the state to the Makhkaamat ul-Madhalim, a special court that investigates negligence or injustice in ruling, allowing women to openly account their rulers without fear.

Conclusion:

Dear sisters, from this description, it is clear how it is only the Shariah of Islam implemented comprehensively under the Khilafah that can give a bright future to the lives of Muslim women. It is a historical fact that this was the only State able to bring prosperity and security for all people under its reign, including its women. This is to be expected for it is only the application of the Laws of the Creator that can establish for women the high status and rights that He (swt) prescribes for them. So it is a must that we no longer look for solutions to our problems as Muslim women from outside of Islam. Therefore, let us turn our attention, hopes and efforts to the re-establishment of this glorious state which alone holds the promise of delivering real change and a dignified future for the women of the Muslim world. Allah (swt) says,

﴿فَإِمَّا يَأْتِيَنَّكُم مِّنِّي هُدًى فَمَنِ اتَّبَعَ هُدَايَ فَلَا يَضِلُّ وَلَا يَشْقَىٰ وَمَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَن ذِكْرِي فَإِنَّ لَهُ مَعِيشَةً ضَنكًا وَنَحْشُرُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ أَعْمَىٰ﴾

"**Whoever follows My Guidance shall neither go astray, nor fall into distress and misery. But whoever turns away from My Reminder (That is, neither believes in the Qur'an nor acts on its orders) verily, for him is a life of hardship, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Resurrection.**" [TMQ Ta-Ha: 123-124]

Iffah Ainur Rochmah

Spokeswoman of Hizb ut Tahrir Indonesia

TALK 5
Speech from
TURKEY



The Role of Women in Creating True Political Change

Dear Guests and Dear Muslims!

I greet you with the most beautiful of the greetings, the Salaam of Allah (swt).

Assalaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuhu

I greet you from the souls of the Uthmani Khilafah.

I greet you from the land of Fatih Sultan Muhammed Khan! The Sultan, who defeated the Roman Empire and conquered Constantinople, enabling future generations of Muslims to expand the borders of the Islamic Khilafah until it reached the doors of Vienna.

I greet you as the granddaughters of Khalifah Suleyman I who sent an armada of 36 ships to Spain to rescue 70,000 Muslims of Al-Andalus – men and women - who were being persecuted by its Christians rulers.

I greet you from the realm of Sultan Abdul Hamid who did not give up a handful of the soil of Baitul Maqdis and who protected Masjid Al-Aqsa.

I call Allah (swt) the Almighty to honour you with obedience to Him and greet you with the most beautiful of my duas.

Dear Guests and Beloved Sisters! These ancient soils we are living on belonged to the Dar'ul Islam (Islamic Lands) for nearly a thousand years. These soils - after Islam came to rule upon them - have always been a safe place for the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects who lived on it, because the Khilafah State always protected its citizens and took care of their rights no matter what the costs were, and without regards for national or economic interests. And those who benefited most of this sheltered and protected life were undoubtedly the women. It was in the presence of the Khilafah - that when a single oppressed woman in Amuriyya which is next to Ankara, where I am talking now, shouted: "Ya Mu'tasim! Where are you?" - that we had rulers who took the helm of the state's army in order to respond to her call. But now, we do not have any rulers like Khalifah Mu'tasım who are willing to lend an ear to the outcries of aggrieved women and who are willing to respond to the calls of needy women!

Accordingly, today we live a life far from having such protection and safety. Muslim women across the world are being persecuted and their dignity humiliated because they do not have anyone among the rulers of the Muslim lands who is willing to help them. There is no security of life and property and honour left anymore.

But what is done today in Turkey and across the world in order to rescue women from this dire situation? And if it is asked, "What is it that will defend and protect the woman?" the first answer that comes to mind for many is feminism and gender equality. Unfortunately feminists are given this opportunity - who instead of solving the problem, are rather deepening it - due to not knowing the laws provided by the Islamic Shariah which are in accordance with the nature and the reality of women, and also due to the absence of a state that would implement these laws. The first association generated in the minds by feminism is equality of men and women in rights, roles, and choices.

Feminists therefore undertake a number of actions for women's rights upon this basis, for example, calling for enshrining gender equality in constitutions, legalizing abortion, and engaging in work to enact laws which prohibit polygamy. However, they ignore the fact that countries such as Denmark and Sweden which have been praised for their gender equality laws and labelled as the most gender egalitarian according to the UN Gender Equality Index, also have the highest incidences of violence against women according to a 2014 survey by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. In Denmark, 52% of women were victims of violence and in Sweden, 46%.

Feminists are also struggling to establish higher numbers of women in parliament or among government staff, claiming that this is the path to improve women's rights. However, they disregard the fact that in Rwanda, even though 64% of its MP's are women, 45% of its population still remain below the poverty line, a figure that includes millions of women. Furthermore, in South Africa, although 40% of its National Assembly are women, the country has gained world notoriety for being one of the rape capitals of the world. Feminists also call for more women to enter the workplace, claiming that this is the path to women's empowerment, respect, and better lives. However, countries such as Malawi, Mozambique and Burundi, where women make up a larger portion of the workforce than men, are hardly role models for securing women's wellbeing. In addition to all this, the feminist method for change also includes reforming individual laws within states, enacting international women's agreements and organizing countless awareness-raising campaigns against problems such as violence against women. However, none of these actions or strategies have been able to even dent the scale of abuse women face within societies, or bring any solutions to women's problems.

So why did feminists not succeed? We can answer this question as follows: Feminism is essentially built upon a wrong basis. Feminists dealt with every problem that women faced as a problem of gender. So while expressing their demand for the rights for women, they did not see that the true cause of women's problems originated from the man-made systems that governed over them and the corrupt thoughts and values that dominated their societies. They did not realize the incapability of man-made ideologies in providing happiness to the human or solving problems effectively due to the flawed, biased and limited minds of human beings – whether male or female. They did not see that implementing such systems opened the door to the emergence of dictatorships that oppressed women and deprived them of their rights. And they did not recognise that it is the capitalist democratic secular system which is responsible for impoverishing millions of women and causing the dire state of education, healthcare and other public services in our lands. They also closed their eyes to the fact that it is this system that has allowed the exploitation of the bodies of women for profit, promoted the pursuit of individualistic desires, and sanctioned the sexualisation of women – all of which has degraded the status of women, causing the epidemic of sexual crimes and other abuses they face today.

Therefore, feminists erroneously sought to partially reform laws and policies, rather than uprooting the systems in our lands. Their method for change therefore simply maintained the status quo and strengthened the corrupt and rotten regimes across the Muslim world, which are the primary source of misery for the region's women. This is because they diverted attention from the real problem and worked within flawed systems rather than a radical overhaul of them, wasting the efforts of many.

My Dear Sisters! It is Islam, which presents sound solutions to problems related to every sphere of life. It has therefore also determined the most appropriate solutions for women. Indeed, the woman living under the Rayah of the Khilafah State which implemented Islam's Shariah, was a chaste girl, a protected woman, a distinguished mother and a strong wife. For this State is one that does not tolerate a single word or act against the dignity of women, a state that enables the Muslim woman to wear her Islamic dress and fulfil all her Islamic obligations under the full protection of the law, and a state that mobilises whole armies to defend her blood and honour if needed. It is a state which will be ruled by leaders of taqwa who are devoted servants and guardians of their people as Islam demands, who will shoulder their economic burdens, and strive to provide them good, dignified lives. It is a state that will lift from women the heavy burden of earning their own living, and ensure for them the comfort of financial security. And it is a state that will return all the God-given rights that women deserve, empowering their political voice, and accepting nothing less than providing them with a first-class education and healthcare system. This is what the implementation of the Shariah under the Khilafah affords the woman – Muslim and non-Muslim!

Therefore sisters, real change for women in our Muslim lands, can only be achieved through the re-establishment of this Khilafah state. And this can only be realized through political and intellectual work which requires changing the non-Islamic ideas in our societies to Islamic ones, and removing the oppressive man-made systems which poison our lands from their roots, and replacing them with the system of Islam. This is the true path to create real political change for women. Any action, strategy, or method other than this, is doomed to fail in improving women's lives and will only prolong their suffering. The establishment of this state is also an obligation placed upon our necks as Muslim men and women, for Allah (swt) says,

﴿وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَآ أَنزَلَ ٱللَّهُ فَأُوْلَٰٓئِكَ هُمُ ٱلْفَٰسِقُونَ﴾

"**And whoever does not rule by what Allah has revealed, they are the wrongdoers.**" [Al-Maidah: 47]

So praise to Allah Ta'ala that today, the call for this sound solution is becoming stronger day by day amongst the Muslim men and women across the world. Indeed, polls of the Muslim world show clearly that the women of the region overwhelmingly support the implementation of the Shariah, for example, a 2012 Gallup poll on the views of women in Arab countries found that 82% of women in Egypt, 90% in Yemen, and 74% in Tunisia support the Shariah as a source of legislation. And at the forefront of the struggle to establish the Khilafah on the way of the Prophethood has been Hizb ut Tahrir, a global Islamic political party, consisting of hundreds of thousands of members from the East to the West.

This includes thousands of female members across the world who are engaging in an intense and committed struggle to establish this state. For example, in 2012, the women of Hizb ut Tahrir organised a historic International Women's Conference in Tunisia entitled, "The Khilafah: A Shining Model of Women's Rights and Political Role." It was the first and largest women's only conference organized in the region of the Arab Spring since the toppling of dictators and was attended by approximately 1000 women from across the world including politicians, writers, academics, journalists, leaders of society and representatives of organizations. Later the same year, another momentous international conference was organised in Indonesia, entitled, 'The Khilafah: Protecting Women from Poverty and Enslavement'. The conference gathered around 1500 influential women with female speakers of the party from Southeast Asia, Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Arab world. The women of Hizb ut Tahrir have also organised a number of global campaigns in recent years, including raising awareness of the plight of the Muslim women and children in Syria, Palestine, Burma, and Central Africa. Alongside these international events, the women of the party across the world work tirelessly within their own societies in carrying the dawah for the Khilafah, preserving the Islamic identity of Muslims and fighting the propaganda war against Islam - organizing talks, conferences, discussions in mosques, madrassahs and homes; participating in debates with politicians, writers, journalists and other female opinion makers; hosting round-table discussions with influential women; producing leaflets, magazines and books; and engaging with the media.

So dear, distinguished guests, at the end of today's important conference on women and Shariah, what is it

that we, your sisters from Hizb ut Tahrir are asking of you? Our dear beloved sisters, those of you who have attended today have much influence in your communities and a large network of contacts. This is truly a great blessing from Allah (swt) that He has bestowed upon you for you have the ability to create great change amongst your communities. So we ask of you to use your influence to do three things Insha Allah: Firstly, to reject the concepts of feminism and gender equality which are alien to our belief and have delivered nothing but false hope, broken promises, and worsened the problems of women. This includes rejecting treaties, agreements, laws, and movements shaped upon these non-Islamic ideals as well as strongly challenging any attempts to secularise and reform the Islamic social laws within our communities. It also includes discarding the harmful non-Islamic concept of 'Islamic feminism'. Secondly to equip and empower your communities with the knowledge and arguments to counter any attacks on the status of women in the Shariah and to present the truth to all they know about the true position, rights, and duties of women in Islam and under Islamic rule. Alongside this, let us endeavour to engage actively with the media and use our own media, social media, and all means at our disposal to fight the lies against our Deen and initiate true debates about the best system to secure dignified lives for women. But sisters, this also means calling our communities to reject any non-Islamic views and practices that are oppressing women and which are exploited by those who have an agenda against Islam to accuse our Deen. And thirdly, we call you to support the dawah for the Khilafah by discussing with all those you know how this is the system defined by Allah (swt) to govern our Muslim lands, as well as the only system that can solve the oppression and mountain of problems facing women today, and which will give the value to the woman she deserves.

And by fulfilling this great obligation that Allah (swt) has placed upon us, look forward dear sisters Insha Allah to the great rewards He (swt) promises those who struggle to establish His Deen upon this earth, for Allah's Messenger (saw) said, «إذا جاء الموت طالب العلم، وهو على هذه الحال مات وهو شهيد» "**He whom death overtakes while he is engaged in acquiring knowledge with a view to reviving Islam with the help of it, there will be one degree between him and the prophets in Paradise.**"

I end my words to you dear sisters with the wish to meet you soon under the Rāyat al-`Uqāb and greet you with the Salaams of Allah (swt).

Wa Assalaamu Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuhu

Women's Section
in the Central Media Office of
Hizb ut Tahrir

